



Vibrations

Newsletter for members of the Owasippe Staff Assn.

Volume 20

Fall/Winter 1995

President's Perspective

Having spent most of the summer working on Staff and attending the September work week end, I can truly say that the OSA left its mark on Owasippe this summer and fall.

With thirty OSA members working on Staff and an additional twelve recruited at the Staff Luncheon hosted by the OSA our message was spread throughout the Camp. Yours in the purpose. The luncheon was a success thanks to the help of numerous volunteers including our Board of Directors.

With the placement of Mike Drazba as Property Director and the rehiring of Bill Schaefer, Jerry Lutz and Pete Klaeser for the "96" Season, new visions will be seen on the horizons. It is our job to bring these visions into focus.

Yours in the purpose, Bob Ward

Contents

President's Perspective	1
Upcoming Events	1
Board of Directors	1
Old Owasippe Revisited	2
Staff Village	4
Words from Tom Ewan	5
Words from Bill Schaefer	5
Trail Crew	5
Words from Art Paull	6
Galloping Grapevine	7
Friends That We Will Miss	7
OSA Picnic	7
Entertainment Books	7
Fall Fix-It	8
New Life Members	8
Pictures	9

Upcoming OSA Events

Annual Dinner Dance March 1996

1995 Board of Directors

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Summers at Owasippe and Owasippe's Early Years Revisited

Dear Sirs:

I have read with much interest the Summer 1995 issue of OSA Vibrations, particularly the articles by Ed Black and Jeanne Gunn Rousseau.

Lin Carter sent me Jeanne's article in September 1992, and I enclose a copy of my reply to him. (The Ernie Even mentioned has since passed away.)

Some of my recollections differ somewhat from Ed Black's. The following comments include those and a few extra bits of information, and also should be read in conjunction with my letter of September 30, 1992 to Lin Carter.

Editors Note: Here are the highlights from the letter to Lin Carter, which end at number 1.

I was a camper under "Pop" Gunn at Camp Dan Beard from 1924 through 1927, prior to starting a 7 year stint at GHQ. Actually, I was on staff in 1926 and 1927, serving as Camp Clerk the last year and sharing an office with "Pop" Gunn in the "rambling old red mess hall".

"Pop" Gunn was one of the finest men I have ever known. He possessed great originality and ingenuity in delivering the Scouting program, was worshipped by the campers and revered by the staff. There are more stories that I could add. We corresponded for several years after he left Beaumont.

For Mrs. Rousseau's queries:

Camp West was named for James E. West, the legendary Chief Scout Executive for many years.

Camp McDonald was not named for the farmer but for L. L. McDonald, for many years Director of Camping nationally. The name of the camp changed to Camp Stuart in 1929 or so.

One of the directors at Camp McDonald was Harry K. Eby who had a long and distinguished career as a professional scouter.

The Assistant Director at Beard, late in the summer of 1927, was A. A. Kirk, also a distinguished Scouter, who was starting his professional career.

The waterfront director "named Chet" was Chet Koehler who also went into professional Scouting.

1. Walter H. "Pop" Gunn did not direct the Owasippe Scout Camps. He was the director at Dan Beard for a number of years, the last being 1927. I may be mistaken but nor do I recall Al Kirk ever directing the entire Scout reservation. He succeeded "Pop" Gunn as Camp Director of Beard.

2. The number of camps and locations differ somewhat depending on the time span. For the most part we remember Beard, West, McDonald (name changed in 1929 or so to Stuart) and a Family Camp on Crystal Lake, Blackhawk, Checaugau and the Family Camp (248 Club) on Big Blue. Belnap (originally Belknap) was on two small lakes in the Little Blue area. General Headquarters (GHQ) was on the rise above Camp West and consisted of the office building, the warehouse (including the Owasippe, Michigan U. S. Post Office), and the ice house, which stored ice cut from Crystal Lake in the winter by Rue Miller and his crew, packed in sawdust, and used in the Camps all summer.

Camp Belnap came into being sometime in the early or mid 20's when the Scout Executive of the Douglas District (Mason Fields) requested a separate camp for his district, contending it would encourage membership by the Afro-American community. For a year or two (1929-30) it utilized facilities at Hiawatha Beach on Big Blue. In 1928, a wilderness camp was located on Hiawatha Beach with tree houses for scouts in a nature study program, adirondacks for the pioneering group, tents for the hiking Scouts, and waterfront tents for the waterfront activity interests. Belnap then was moved to the Little Blue area.

3. I remember the Brightwell's but do not recall "postal deliveries" or "fresh meat". When I served as U. S. Postmaster of Owasippe, Michigan in 1929, I drove into Whitehall daily to pick up the mail that was dropped off in sacks at the Whitehall post office, and then I delivered the mail to the respective camps after sorting. When I served as Commissary Officer for all camps in 1932, 1933 and 1934, I purchased all fresh meat in the Chicago market as no local slaughterer was certified by the U. S. Government. By 1928, or earlier, we had our own fleet of three large trucks and three pick-up trucks, operation out of the GHQ warehouse. I served as Warehouse Director in 1930 and 1931. Brightwell was used when our own trucking facilities needed help, especially to truck campers, bed rolls, suitcases, etc. to and from camps at Big Blue from the docks at eagle Ottawa Leather Company where the S. S. Carolina disembarked the Scouts, and later from an open field two miles or so southwest of Crystal Lake when transportation was switched (1929) to a chartered Pere Marquette Railroad train. Otherwise, all deliveries including such heavy ones as coal (for cooking), ice, canoes, etc. were handled by the Owasippe trucks.

4. Robert Stuart was one of the founders of the Quaker Oats Company. I do not believe he ever served as President of the Chicago Council but he may have. His son, R. Douglas Stuart, did and perhaps the current Stuart, Robert D. Stuart, also served as President. The Stuart and Douglas families were extremely active in scouting, nationally and locally (all were Silver Buffalo's). James H. Douglas was also a co-founder of Quaker Oats. His son, James H. Douglas Jr. served as President of the Chicago Council.

5. I recall E. Urner Goodman being at Owasippe a great deal in 1927 but I do not recall his taking control of the daily operations. The Camp Director was P. B. Samson and had been for some years. He was Director of Physical Education at Michigan State Teachers College in Ypsilanti during the school year. E. Urner Goodman tried unsuccessfully in 1927 and 1928 to induce Al Nichols to leave the Philadelphia Council and come to Chicago as Camping and Finance Director. Failing in 1928, Hanson W. Hahn, a professional Scouter from St. Louis, was hired. Al Nichols was finally persuaded to come for the 1929 season and virtually "cleaned house" at GHQ (it needed it). He also brought in Craig Atkinson, a mathematics instructor at Northwestern University and a former Superior National Forest guide and a Scoutmaster, as Program Director. I could write reams of the changes that were made and improvements instituted. For instance, campsites were dispersed by troop sites and the parade ground set-up was terminated; the red, white and blue wilderness trails were created; transporting of Scouts was switched to a special Pere Marquette train solely used by Owasippe; an inviting stay-over program was instituted to induce more than one period (two weeks) camping; emphasis on camping by city troops; etc. No mention of Owasippe personnel should ever take place without mentioning this trio led by the outstanding Al Nichols.

6. I did know once the origin of the name of Camp Belnap but I do not presently recall. Checaugau is easy. Historically, it was the original spelling of "Chicago". I do not remember it ever serving the Douglas District. It did serve the Northwest District of Chicago from whence came Stan Miller, George Mozealous, Schiller Colberg, George Schnier, etc. Before being east of Blackhawk on Big Blue Lake it was located northwest of Chicago. The late Bill Fetridge, prominent for years in local and national scouting, camped there as a boy. His son, Clark Fetridge, continues

currently in Scouting on a local, national and international basis.

7. Kopeck, the first caretaker, was a farmer in the Crystal Lake area. He was succeeded by Rue Miller who acted as such for many years in the 20's and 30's. Many of those named by Ed Black went into professional Scouting, including Ernie Schmidt (who then left Scouting to serve for many years as the Executive Director of the American Camping Association), Jack Perez, who started as the GHQ waiter in the Beard Mess Hall, Shiller Colberg, who became Scout Executive in the Los Angeles area, George Mozealous as Scout Executive in Denver, etc.

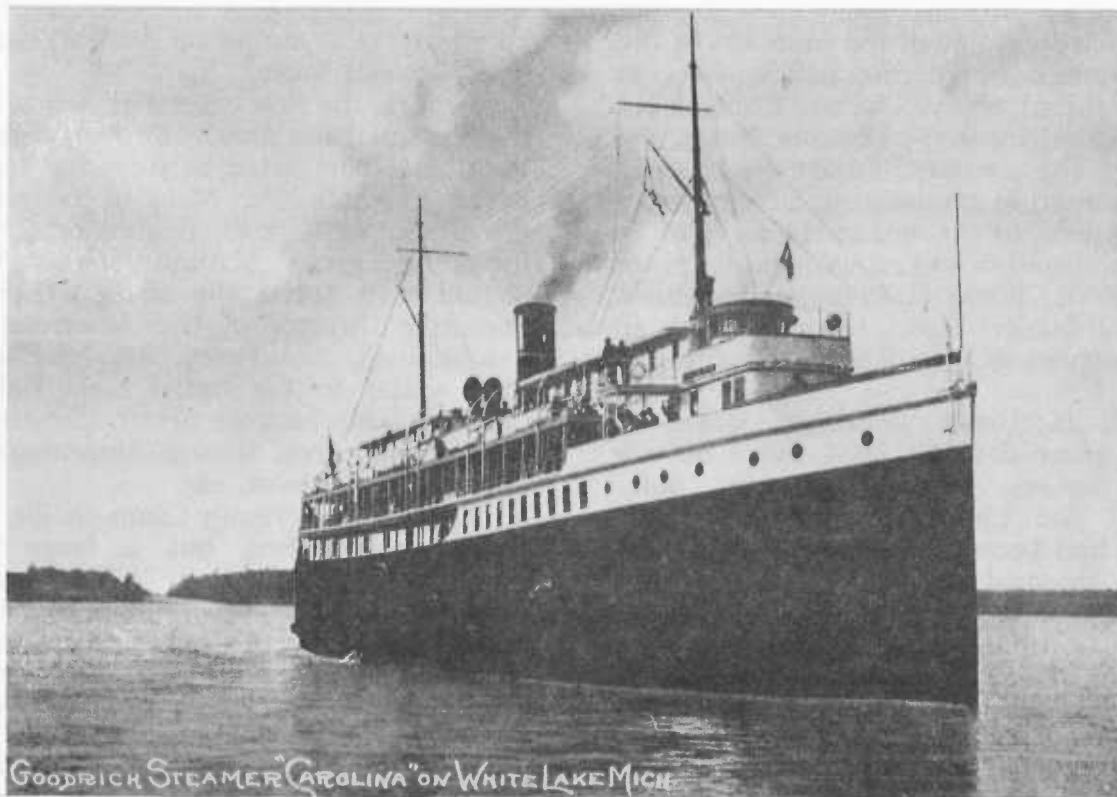
8. The 248 Club (Family Camp on Big Blue) was not a log building but a large two-story, wooden frame building. The second floor consisted of an open balcony completely around the inside of the building and sleeping rooms which opened off of the balcony.

9. When I was a Scout, and for many years before and after, Owasippe ran five two-week periods. Scouts arrived (from ship or later by train) early Monday evening in time for the evening meal and left twelve days later on Saturday morning, arriving in Chicago late that afternoon. The stay over period (with no charge) ran that Saturday, Sunday and Monday. The camp charge was \$10 for a period plus \$1 each way on the S. S. Carolina. The train fare was \$3 round trip. In the early years, each period had an added attraction such as a Scout circus, a treasure hunt, red and white war, etc. Many Scouts selected periods for the particular special events.

10. Each year a spring camp was held for one week during the May school break. It was geared to work and no fee was charged. Two hundred or so Scouts participated each year. It was during these times that many of the second growth timbers were planted, fire breaks built, roads repaired, etc. The spring camp centered around Beard. A winter camp was also held during the Christmas school break. It was centered on Big Blue Lake at Checaugau, and featured skiing, ice boating, hiking on snowshoes, ice skating, etc.

11. For many years (1926-1934) I wrote a Scouting article weekly on Saturday for the Chicago Daily News. During the summer months the emphasis was on Owasippe. Once a summer, I wrote a full page article about Owasippe for the Muskegon Chronicle. The articles carried my personal name by-line or "By Eagle Scout". My picture often accompanied the articles. They have all been deposited in the Owasippe Museum.

12. I am proud to say I have been continuously registered in scouting since



December 1922. In 1926, I was fortunate to receive my Eagle Badge from Lord Baden Powell when he visited Chicago. I am also proud to say I Have served as Council President, Honorary Council President, Chairman of Region 7, and on the National Board and Advisory Council. I have been honored to receive the Silver Beaver, Silver Antelope, Silver Buffalo, Distinguished Eagle Scout Award, Mortimer Schiff award, and the Vigil Honor of the Order of the Arrow. Please don't misunderstand. I mention these facts solely to emphasize with pride my Scouting background which has played such a major part in my life.

Very truly yours, Milton H. Gray

Staff Village

A recent donation of significant magnitude was made by Milton H. Gray and has been entirely ear-marked for use in renovating Staff Village. There's plenty to do and the moneys in place for all the materials and supplies. Help is urgently needed, so if you have some time, make some plans to head up to "O". Call Mike Drazba at (616) 894-4061.

Dear Editor,

The articles in the September 1995 Vibrations were very interesting. Both authors mention travel to Whitehall on a steamer ship named Carolina. This rang a bell and I found the enclosed postcard of the Carolina that I purchased at the Montague Museum on Mead and Church St. in Whitehall's sister town, Montague. Cindy, my wife, is the daughter of one of the museum's curators, Henry Roesler. Mayor Roesler, a life long resident of Montague is an excellent source of information and delightful to talk to about the town's history. Cindy even recognizes some of the businesses mentioned in the Vibrations' article and thinks many have been passed to the next generation.

For a more complete history of the area that welcomed those early Scouters and a thoroughly enjoyable visit with a life long "local", stop by the museum on Saturday or Sunday in the afternoon. And don't forget Todds Drug Store, Pitkin Drug Store, Dog & Suds, Big John's Pizza, Dairy Queen, etc. I may be losing hair but not my appetite. A visit is never complete until I stop to eat.

From Jim Frale (early 70's staff)

A Few Words From Tom Ewan

The board of directors meet with Tom Ewan and these are a few of the things that he let us know about the future of Owasippe.

To the Owasippe Staff Association:

1. Owasippe is not for sale. We are going to maintain the size we are. The Council Executive Board & Professionals are committed to the Camping Program.
2. My priority is to continue the development of the Boy Scout Programs.
3. Outside group use of Owasippe will be continued, but not a priority.
4. The Council has hired Mike Drazba as the full-time Property Manager to oversee the physical plant operations.
5. I am committed to what the OSA can do for Owasippe. Whatever Owasippe and the Council can do to support the Association, we will do.

It is very important for me to get to know your group and I will do that as the year proceeds. Thank you for everything you do for Owasippe. Contact me anytime if you have any questions.

Sincerely, Tom Ewan, Director of Camping

A Few Words from Bill Schaefer

On behalf of the 1995 Owasippe staff, and myself, I want to again thank you for your tremendous efforts in preparing Owasippe for the Scout Campers this summer. So many participated in the "Fix-it Weekend" on May 19-21, and we appreciate their labors of love! On May 20, several OSA members helped train 75 of our staff at our training session in Chicago. The OSA helps in so many ways (CIT training, and so on)!

Maybe in '96, the work weekend and the training won't be on the same weekend. That would be an improvement. We'll work on that.

I am very happy that the "OSA Report" will be an integral part of every Owasippe Task Force meeting from now on!

Well, please accept my congratulations on jobs well done, and my thanks.

Yours, Bill, Sr. (5/27/1995)

Trail Crew

During the weekend of May 19-21 Bill Schaefer, Jr. and his trail crew accomplished the following:

1. They hiked the blue trail from Reneker to the Horse Corral, and the white trail from the Horse Corral to the Museum. Overall, these sections were well marked but not as well

traced. They hung about 25 new blue trail markers and 10 new white trail markers.

2. They hiked the red trail from the Museum to the red/orange junction at Dam #3. This trail was poorly marked through the logged section behind the maintenance area so about 50 new trail markers were hung. The red trail now clearly splits from the orange trail at this junction.

3. They hiked the white trail between the marl beds and the red/orange/white junction and hung about 10 new white trail markers.

4. They hiked the white trail between the orange trail near Kingsley Dam to its connection with the blue trail and hung about 20 new white trail markers.

5. They hiked the white trail beginning at the Crown Chapel (where it connects to the orange trail) to its connection with the blue trail near Mayo Lake. 25 new trail markers were hung in order to change this trail from a poorly marked one into a clearly marked trail. This includes a clearly marked junction with the blue trail.

6. All trails had some branches trimmed in order to make the trails easily accessible.

Counselor In Training Program

As in the past, the Owasippe Staff Association agreed to sponsor the Counselor In Training Program for 1995. This noteworthy project is truly worthy of the OSA as it embodies everything that the organization stands for and, certainly, strikes the common chord of camp staffing that originally brought us all together to form the OSA. The CIT staff wishes to thank the OSA for their gracious support in 1995 and hopes you will agree to do the same come 1996. Ron Kulak, Pat Romcoe, Kevin Oster, Joe Sener, Frank Chlebek, and Phil "Chauncey" Niziol were on the CIT training staff.

As a brief re-cap, we had 21 CIT's go through our training which included a weekend orientation at Hoover Outdoor Education Center and a week-long training encampment, Camp Enthusiasm, located at Camp Wolverine. It was a great experience for one of the better CIT classes in recent time. For your information, the CIT of the year was Gerald "ZiZi" Branch of the Chicago Area Council. Given the opening of a third camp, Camp Carlen, in 1996, our CIT recruitment goal for 1996 is 30. We'll also need the OSA's help in recruiting staff for Owasippe's 85th Anniversary. Please contact Ron Kulak at (708) 429-5596 if you know of any potential CIT's for the 1996 season.

A recent issue of VIBRATIONS included a questionnaire on events and activities intended to help us plan for the future. The intent was to solicit ideas and HELP. While the response was small, there were some good ones. Unfortunately, the folks involved chose to keep their anonymity.

I suppose it will always be easier to make suggestions than to help implement them. It will always be easier to complain about a problem than to help fix it. I know the number one reason to keep my distance and stay in the shadows: "If I volunteer I'll get stuck doing all the work. It'll eat up all of what little free time I have. And, when it's all over all I'll hear is people complaining at or about me." That's not fun and no one wants to find themselves in that position.

Our organization is operated by a relatively small group of very dedicated people who find themselves called upon time and time again. Yet our membership numbers some 300, and that doesn't include anyone that isn't current with their dues. I can only guess how many more haven't paid their dues in recent years (a couple hundred?) or never even joined (another couple hundred?).

The OSA (and Owasippe) need help if they are going to survive, let alone grow. The board is in the process of expanding and re-structuring the organization. There will be much greater opportunity to be involved, lend support, and provide leadership for our future.

We all need to take a long, hard look at what we expect from the OSA, and what we, as individuals, plan to do to help make it happen.

Think about it.....if everyone pitches in a little, then no one has to carry the whole load. We could accomplish our goals and STILL HAVE FUN doing it. And that's the real reason we joined in the first place, isn't it?

It is not my intention to upset anyone by what's said here. There are many who have been very active and contributed greatly. You know who you are. Yet, I realize that some will be upset. I guess, if nothing else, at least that's a reaction.

The forementioned questionnaire is running again in this issue. I'm hoping that you'll take a couple minutes to use it.

Thank You
Sincerely

Art Paull

The Galloping Grapevine

Tony Escobedo called to say that he worked this summer at a Scout Camp near his home in Rice Lake Wisconsin. He looks forward to seeing all of his friends this summer at OSR.

Pat Foster enjoyed the summer at Owasippe this year and hopes to see everyone soon. He is getting ready for his winter hiatus to Florida.

Gerald "ZZ" Branch was the OSR CIT of the year.

Mike Ward has another daughter, Madelyn Marie.

Gary Glowienke has had his cast removed and is fit for work, which is great because the Camp needs someone to run COPE this summer.

Charley Cleveland was unable to make Camp and the Work-weekend because of ill health. He is feeling fine now.

We wish Ron Neibert a speedy recovery. We need someone to show us where the small mouths are hidden.

Bob Ward was glad to see Joe Klefeker back at Camp, and also to hear that Art Michaelson had been back lending a hand. Thanks Guys.

Dues Need Paying

Check the number under your name on the mailing label. If it is 1995 or less, you need to update your dues. If your dues have been neglected for several years this could be your last newsletter! Please send the \$10 yearly renewal to:

OSA
Attn: Membership Committee
P.O. Box 7097
Westchester, IL. 60154

New Members Needed

Know of any potential OSA members? Send their names, addresses, and phone numbers to

Frank Chlebek
11358 S. Fairfield
Chicago IL, 60655

Friends That We Will Miss

Vitold S. Olechno, father of Joseph Olechno.

Linda M. Schaefer wonderful wife of William E. Schaefer, Sr.; terrific mother of William E., Jr., the late Steven M., Karen A. Nyberg and Kristin L.

Linda sent the OSA a letter on July 15, 1995 that read.

Dear OSA Friends,

I wanted to let you know how much your kind words, hugs, deeds, cards, and prayers have meant to Bill and I during the past few months.

You are a special group of people and I'll always remember your kindness.

Love,

Linda Schaefer

Grapevine News Needed

If you know news about one of our OSA or OSR friends write to us about it. Please include weddings, births, deaths, change of career, promotions, demotions or anything else that you can think of. Send to the:

OSA
P.O. Box 7097
Westchester, IL. 60154

OSA Picnic

Dear OSA,

9/16/95

I would like to thank you for a first class OSA Picnic this year. This has been the first OSA Picnic that I have attended in many years, and I have to say that I had a wonderful time. It's always nice to see old friends, make new ones, and have a good time.

Although I was not on staff this year, I plan on continuing that tradition next year, and for a long time after that.

Thanks for a great day!

Sarah Niziol

Entertainment Books

If you have not purchased your 1996 Entertainment Book, then your time is running out. The books only cost \$35, and they can save you hundreds of dollars on dining, entertainment, travel, etc. Contact Mike Campbell at (312) 283-7233 to place your order.

Fall Fix-It

The fall Fix-It was a great success and much was accomplished. Our best count indicates that there were a total of 101 in attendance with 49 working on project crews. We want to thank everyone, including some new faces: Kerry Mikkelsen, Dustin Hoffman (really), Bob McMillin & Crew, Jim Malebranche, John Thorne, Brian and Joanne O'Reilly. Hope to see all at the next one and bring a friend!

The following letter is from our own Mike Drazba, now the Property Manager at Owasippe (we finally have an inside track), and summarizes the weekend.

Dear OSA,

10/9/95

I'm sorry that this list took so long in getting to you but I just got swamped with things to do. This new job and career is quite a change. It's a lot of work but it is something that I enjoy doing. Here is the list of jobs that were started and or completed at the last work weekend.

PLUMBING: Removed unused gas lines behind the snack bar, repaired leaks in five Carlen latrines, repaired a water heater leak, repaired the sink drain at Carlen dining hall, began closing the water system down for the winter.

ROOFING: Tore off and reroofed Carlen boat house, tore off and reroofed the #1 pump house at Blackhawk, removed the roof and replaced the damaged boards on the roof of the Carlen lodge, reroofed it and removed the existing lighting system so that it could be upgraded to code, tore off and reroofed three latrines at Carlen.

CARPENTRY: Repaired the sink base at the Carlen dining hall, repaired and replaced the termite and water damage to the exterior siding, repaired the sliding doors and counter area in the dining hall, replaced the damaged fascia at the Carlen lodge, repaired and replaced the porcupine damage on the twelve Carlen latrines, repaired the screens in the dining hall, repaired the picnic tables and floorboards at Crown and Carlen, repaired the doors and frames at the Carlen dining hall, closed off the entry to the pool pit at Reneker and built a new storeroom for the pool area.

MASONRY: Cut drainage trough in the concrete at the dock to prevent storm water from flooding the dining hall, replaced the threshold at the entry doors with new ADA approved ramps for use with wheelchairs.

ELECTRICAL: Replaced the freezer motor at the dry food dock, ran new lights in the storeroom

at Reneker pool, repaired various outlets and panels on the camp.

PHONE SYSTEM: Located and identified faults in the underground phone lines and recommended programming for the existing system to bring the system to full use.

PAINTING AND DECORATING: Prepped and painted the Carlen kitchen, hallway, and began to paint the exterior of the building. Trimmed the building and coated the new wood.

TRANSPORTATION: Moved the refrigerators and freezers from the Carlen kitchen to the Food Prep basement for repairs. Supported the work crews with tools, materials, and

VEHICLE REPAIR: Replaced the gas tanks on the garbage truck and one of the ranger trucks, repaired the electrical system on a van, began securing the vehicles for winter.

WELDING AND FABRICATING: Fabricated new beds for the stake trucks, welded stops on the camp gates and painted them.

SUPPORT SERVICES: Prepared and served the meals and cleaned the kitchen, baby sat, provided the camp fire program and photographed the events.

This is quite a list. It shows that the spirit off Owasippe is still alive in our hearts, that there are people who really want this place to succeed. All I can say is thanks to everyone who came and helped out. If there is anything else that I can do for you please call me at (616) 894-4061 or at home at (616) 894-5380. I'll see you soon.

Take Care!

Mike Drazba

Stop The Rumors!

Word has spread that the one-for-one deal was dead. "NOT TRUE" says Mike Drazba, Property Manager at Owasippe. "Its alive and available to all. You have my word on that." What does that mean? Basically, if you come up to Owasippe and work one weekend, you earn another weekends' stay, FREE! Need details? Want to make plans? Give Mike a call at (616) 894-4061.

New Life Members

The OSA would like to welcome the following new life members:

Phil Pappas

Nancy Romcoe

*"The Owasispe Staff
Association is . . .*



*organized to provide
assistance in the
maintainance of . . .*

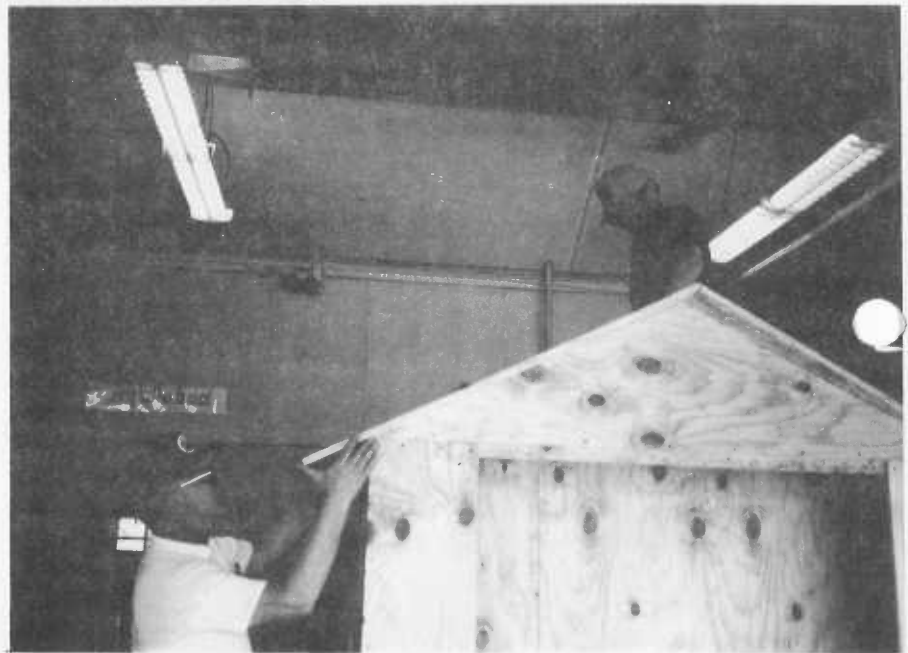
*and in service to the
camping properties
of . . .*



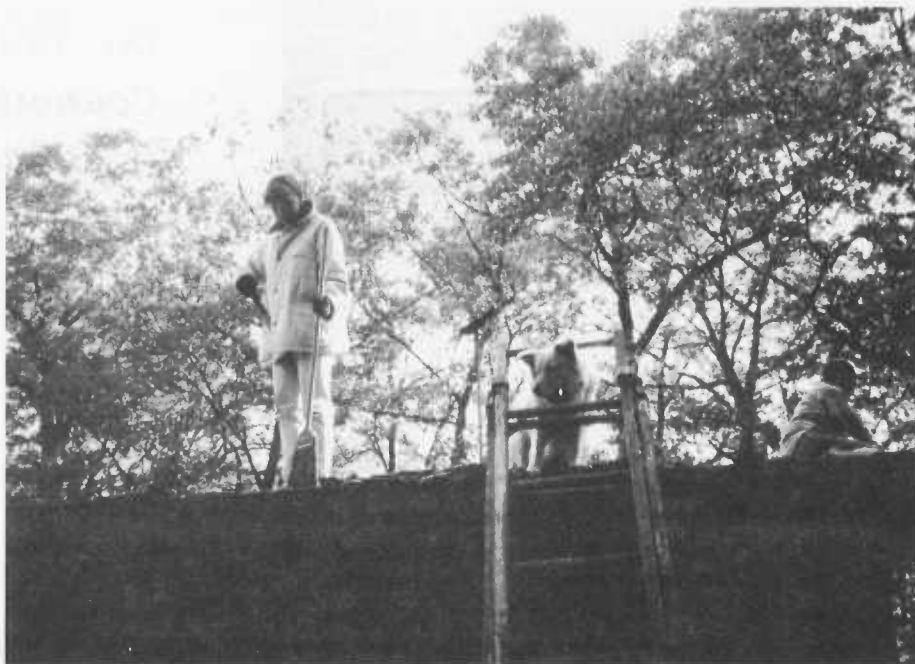


*the Chicago Area
Council of the
Boy Scouts of
America . . .*

*as is deemed necessary
and/or feasible . . .*



*by the Owasippe Stabb
Association . . .*



above and beyond . . .



*what the Chicago Area Council BSA
is able to provide."*

The Owasippe Staff Association
PO Box 7097 Westchester, IL 60154

Mail To:

RONALD J. DERRY
1996



WANTED:

OWASIPPE
CAMP STAFF
FOR 1996
INCLUDING
COUNSELORS
IN-TRAINING
INQUIRE AT
HOOVER OEC
708-553-7361